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HOME LIFE IN HOMESTEAD.

ANARCHY'S UNFORTUNATE CHOICE FOR A HORRIBLE EXAMPLE.

Are These the Homes of the Slaves of a Soulless Corporation?—Four-fifths of the Mill Workers Knew They Were Better Off than Most Laboring Men Elsewhere.

From the New York Tribune.

Homestead was appropriately named. It is a community of homes. When the Carnegie Company assumed control of the Homestead Works it decided to give a permanent character to employment by assisting the men to own their own homes and avoid the drain of rent. To this end it offered to become a bank of deposit; to receive such sums as the men were disposed to lay aside from their earnings, and to allow six per cent. interest on such deposits from the day of deposit to the day of withdrawal, including fractions of months. When a man had saved enough money to purchase a lot, the company agreed to furnish the amount required to build a house, taking a mortgage on the house to cover the loan, the mortgage drawing interest at the rate of six per cent. The amount of individual deposits was limited to \$2,000, the company not caring to pay so high a rate of interest upon larger sums to any one person.

Since this system was adopted 267 men have built houses, and, having paid off the mortgages, own them outright. These houses cost from \$1,600 to \$3,200 each, and are as pretty a lot of cottages as one would care to see. The smallest of them contains five rooms, and is two stories in height. The largest has twelve rooms, and is three stories high, with a Mansard roof and wide veranda. The company has built for the accommodation of its laborers a large number of small tenements. There are long rows of these houses on the bluff above the mills. Each house contains five rooms. They are occupied chiefly by the Hungarians and other day laborers, who earn from \$1.40 to \$2 a day, the rents ranging from \$5 to \$12 a month. The Hungarians are about the only class among the Homestead workmen who buy the cheapest grades of goods. They all save money, and appear to have enough spare cash with which to buy cheap whiskey.

There is a very pronounced condition resembling caste between the higher and lower classes of workmen. The men who earn from \$5 to \$10, and even \$14 a day, live in what is, for Homestead, a luxurious style. They own their own houses, and buy the best of everything. When inquiry as to prevailing prices was made at the store of the leading shoe-dealer, he quoted from sales of shoes of a grade specified, and remarked: "We can sell those only to the Hungarians. The other workmen buy the best qualities we have. And so it was found at every store in the town."

I had the pleasure of visiting some of the fine cottages owned by rollers, heaters, and screwmen. One of twelve rooms, built and owned by a roller, and occupied by his family, will serve as a fair illustration of the class of houses owned and occupied by the higher priced workmen. This house cost \$3,200, and was paid for within three years. The owner said that his earnings had averaged about \$175 a month year in and year out, and including the periods when he was forced to remain idle while repairs were being made. It is a three-story Mansard-roof house, with a wide veranda on two sides. Large double doors open into the main hall, which is reached by a stairway winds to the upper rooms. On the left of the entrance is the parlor, which occupies the whole of the main front. Tapestry carpet which cost \$1.75 a yard covers the parlor floor and the hall. The parlor is furnished with furniture upholstered in plush and silk, with oak or black-walnut frames. A grand piano occupies one corner of the room, about which are tastefully placed a number of easy and ornamental chairs. Near the marble mantel stands an easel on which is an unframed oil painting. There are half a dozen medium-sized works in oil on the walls, and as many more really good etchings and engravings.

The rear of the house forms a double L. In one end of which is the kitchen and pantry, and in the other the dining-room. The kitchen floor is of pine, scrubbed until it is as white as the holystoned deck of a yacht. The room contains a range, set-tubs, and the usual paraphernalia of a well-ordered culinary apartment. The dining-room is very large, and is a library as well as dining-room. On one hand is a goodly sized mahogany sideboard, and on the other a case well filled with a standard books. An extension table in the centre of the room is covered with a heavy cloth. The carpet is of Brussels, and under the table is a heavy rug. The master of the house has for his own use a large secretory standing by the side of his bookcase. The bedrooms are large, well lighted, and airy. The furniture is of maple, antique oak, and ash. The rooms and upper halls are carpeted with a good pattern of ingrain. The owner of it saved \$2,000 during two years, and paid off a mortgage of \$1,000 in another week, exclusively of clothes, of clothing, etc., and including supplies purchased from the tradesmen. It was the owner of this house who said that no matter how much a man earned, he could live well in Homestead, barring house rent, on \$60 a month. It is reasonable to

assume, therefore, that the expenses of those who receive \$50 a week are not much more than one-quarter of that amount, provided they own their own houses.

Forty of the men who built small houses at first have built larger and more expensive ones since, and have paid for them. Twenty have built three or more houses, from the rental of which they now derive a substantial income.

An eight-room house, owned and occupied by a heater's helper, whose wages averaged \$5 a day, was another good specimen of its kind. The house, including the lot, cost \$2,300, and was built with money advanced by the company. The parlor floor is covered with a good quality of Moquette carpet, which could not have cost much less than \$2 a yard, and the parlor furniture is upholstered with plush. The halls and stairways are covered with a neatly woven and very heavy rag carpet. The carpet in the sitting and dining-room is Brussels of first-rate quality, and all of the furniture in those rooms is of oak. The owner said that the cost of furnishing the house was \$600, exclusive of the pictures and ornaments. He carried, he said, an insurance of \$3,000 on the house and its contents. His provision and grocery bills, he said, amounted to about \$35 a month.

The men who earn from \$2.50 to \$4.50 a day own a majority of the five-room cottages. They are chiefly mechanics and the lower classes of tonnage workers. Those houses are all neatly furnished. A dozen or more of those visited had two living-rooms on the first floor and three sleeping-apartments on the other. The kitchens were in the rear of the first floor. The kitchen floors in all but one instance were covered with oil-cloth or linoleum, and were scrupulously clean. They are large rooms, and in cold weather the families use the kitchen as a dining-room. The front room is used as a parlor or sitting-room in winter and summer, but in warm weather it becomes, for the nonce, a dining-room as well. The floors are covered with Brussels or ingrain carpet, and when the front room is used as a dining-room a neat linen rug is spread over the carpet. The furniture is plain and good. The parlors contain upholstered plush or mohair chairs and sofa, with a marble-top table. The mantels are adorned with a few inexpensive ornaments, and the walls are decorated with engravings and chromos, neatly framed. In every house there are two or more easy chairs. The bedrooms are all carpeted with ingrain, and contain sets of antique oak, maple, ash, or elm. Each set consists of bedstead, bureau, wash-stand, and four chairs. The stairs and hall-ways are all carpeted. Every house, or almost every one, has a porch or piazza in front, and as all of the lots are large enough to give room for a garden, every house stands apart by itself. Most of the cottages have vines or creepers in front, and are both cozy and comfortable looking, inside and out. As the owners have no rent to pay, their cost of living depends upon individual economies or extravagances. A reference to the books of an obliging tradesman shows that 80 per cent. of the men who earn from \$2.50 to \$4.50 a day have actual family living expenses of from \$25 to \$35 a month.

The company now has on deposit from the earnings of the men, or did have on July 1, the sum of \$180,000, which drew interest at the rate of 6 per cent. until the company notified its locked-out men to withdraw their deposits. There was outstanding on mortgages on July 1 \$142,000, divided among 476 employees, several of whom had paid off all but a small part of the amount loaned by the company. The company has never foreclosed a mortgage. When an employee has died or left the service, the amount paid on the mortgage has been returned in full, less such amount of interest as might be due at the time. The company has required the men, whenever possible, to pay off their mortgages at about the rate they would ordinarily have to pay for rent. These monthly payments therefore have ranged from \$12 to \$50 according to the size and quality of the house occupied. The company does not build these houses. The men are allowed to select their own plans and to build such houses as their needs or tastes require.

The rents in Homestead of houses not owned by the company range from \$15 to \$36 a month. They are based upon an average of \$3 a month for each room in the house. On this reckoning a five-room house rents for \$15 a month, one of eight rooms for \$24, and one of twelve rooms for \$36 a month. These prices have prevailed for several years. Recently, however, there has been a slight advance in the rentals of houses located on the higher lands in some cases five-room houses that had commanded a rental of \$3 a month now bring \$18, and there has been a proportionate increase for the larger houses situated in similarly favorable neighborhoods. There has been no decrease in the rentals in any part of the town, as far as could be learned. There are few vacant houses in the place, and until recently no new ones have been in course of erection for at least three months, or even since the men first began to realize that the expiration of the old lease might result in a prolonged strike or lockout. The company, however, has begun to build some new cottages for the use of the non-union men recently employed to take the place of the old hands. It is important to note that with the advance in wages, both inside and outside of the mills, there has been quite as steady a decline in the cost of living. Actual sales of nearly 200 articles, taken from the books of Homestead tradesmen, show that prices have declined about 10 per cent. during the last three years; in other words, that \$90 will buy in Homestead to-day as much as \$100 would three years ago. The quotations throughout represent the same qualities of goods, of whatever kind. In all cases the minimum prices are quoted to maintain a respective likeness as to quality. The net showing is a reduction in the cost of almost every article of absolute necessity in the household, and the result has been a period of unprecedented prosperity for a goodly number of the workmen at any rate.

From the New York Times.

When Gen. George B. Snowden, the commander of the Pennsylvania State Militia, reached Homestead with his troops on the morning of July 12, he was astonished at the appearance of the town. While the camp was being put in order he stood, with Division Surgeon Huldekooper and several newspaper men, near the brow of the hill and gazed long and admiringly at the scene spread out below, and as his eye rested on one af-

ter another of the cottages pushing their fancy roofs and terra-cotta chimneys up through the dark green foliage of the oak and maple trees, he turned to Surgeon Huldekooper.

"Well," he said, "taking a long puff of his cigarette, 'I wouldn't mind living here myself for a while.'"

"These fellows must save money," was the reply of Surgeon Huldekooper.

Gen. Snowden's attention was especially attracted to a large house in the French chateau style standing on a promontory. It looked like the country house of some well-to-do city merchant, like one of those fine mansions which dot the fashionable south shore of Long Island and sprinkle the hills sloping down to the east shore of the Hudson River. Through a field glass the outlines of a tennis court could be distinguished on its extensive and well-appointed lawn, and hammocks, fountains, and statuary were scattered over the grounds.

"Wonder whose place that is?" asked Dr. Huldekooper. "I wouldn't mind living here myself for a while."

"That," said one of the newspaper men, "is the house of one of the boss rollers."

"And whose place is that?" asked one of the staff officers, indicating another residence which stood out conspicuously by reason of its size and fine appearance.

"That belongs to a heater," was the reply.

Before the trouble at the Carnegie mills began the heaters were earning from \$30 to \$60 a week, and the boss rollers were making as high as \$10,000 a year. The latter, like the former, were paid by the ton, and were classed on the Amalgamated scale as laborers.

One day, in Pittsburgh, the Times representative saw an open victoria, drawn by two well-matched horses, and driven by a coachman in livery, drawn up to the office entrance to one of the ten-story iron and steel mills on the South Side. A prosperous-looking man of middle age, attired expensively, climbed out, pulled out a gold watch and glanced at the time, and strolled leisurely inside the office. A half hour later the reporter saw the same man, dressed in ordinary working-clothes, standing in one of the mills superintending the operation of rolling the steel. He was the boss roller, and earned \$10,000 a year by the sweat of his brow. He occupied a large house with grounds, on Duquesne Heights, in the fashionable suburb of Pittsburgh.

Hugh O'Donnell, the young "leader," so called of the men, lived in one of the prettiest houses in Homestead. He earned an average of \$50 per week as a heater, and was said to be one of the most contented men in the place.

"I can get you a room in the house of one of the mill hands," said the proprietor. "If you don't mind going there."

There was no other alternative, and the reporter agreed to the proposition, though not without misgivings, which were founded on stories at that time in circulation as to the desperate character of the men.

"Cross the railroad tracks," said the hotel proprietor, "and go down two blocks toward the river. The house is on the second right-hand corner."

On the second right-hand corner stood a large, handsome cottage, in the Queen Anne style, gayly painted, and bearing an appearance of comfortable prosperity which took the reporter's breath away at first sight. The house was apparently new, and was surrounded by pleasant green lawns. The mill man and his wife were sitting on the porch, but arose and looked with an air of mild and benevolent interest at the reporter as he opened the gate and stepped inside.

On entering the hall the reporter found himself in a house furnished almost luxuriously. There was a Brussels carpet on the main hall which was invitingly soft to the feet, and the hall opened on one of the pews of which was a silk hat of the latest pattern, while beside it stood a silver-headed cane.

"Step into the parlor," said the mill hand, pressing an electric button as he spoke, and throwing a flood of light from a cluster of incandescent electric globes to the main room of the house. The parlor was carpeted with velvet, rich patterns, the furniture was upholstered in velvet, and on the black marble mantel were a number of expensive vases and articles of bric-a-brac. Between the two front windows of the room was a small statue on a pedestal, and the walls were papered in a fashionable design.

On reaching the parlor bedroom up stairs the reporter was dumfounded to find a white carpeted room, carpeted with a fine oak furniture, and a large picture on the wall. It is called in the East "decorated with brass ornaments." On the way to the parlor bedroom glimpses were had through the open doors at all the rooms on that floor, and there were Brussels carpets and fine furniture and statuary in each one. There was a thick Brussels carpet on the back and front stairs, and every room in the house was lighted by incandescent lamps, arranged in clusters of pear-shaped globes. There was no hot nor cold water on tap, because Homestead has not yet gotten beyond pumps and artesian wells, but there was a big china wash-basin in the reporter's room of highly decorated china, set in a green and red and bordered with old gold, and the china set of which was a part did not cost less than \$50.

The mill hand—he was one of the "strickers," but not one of the "mobsters,"—courageously declined to board the re-

porter, but agreed to let him occupy the room for two weeks. During his stay there the reporter saw no sign of poverty or anxiety, no evidence even that his landlord was skimping on his household expenses because of the strike. There were three children, a boy and two girls. The boy did not work in the mill, but was going to school, and he spent his leisure time in boating and fishing and swimming, in playing tennis, and in sparring the girls, the latter being the daughters of the other mill workers.

There were never at any time more than 800 mill hands concerned in any way either in the riots or in any of the subsequent agitations. Less than 500 men turned out the night the false alarm came, and, even counting those gathered in the rink and at the Advisory Committee's headquarters and collected in the vicinity of the idle mills, there were never more than 500 men abroad or visible.

Pittsburgh paid very little attention to the strike. The real reason why there was no excitement in Pittsburgh lay in the fact that there was an absence of public sentiment in favor of the Homesteaders, even among their fellow iron and steel workers. Nobody knew better than the Pittsburgh iron and steel workers that the men in Homestead were more fortunate than they in the matter of wages, notwithstanding the alleged reductions of the proposed new scale. The Amalgamated Association was able to drum up a sympathetic strike in the two Carnegie mills in Pittsburgh, but the strike was languid and spiritless and the sympathy largely perfunctory. The men went quietly home, put on their Sunday clothes, and calmly sat down to await the outcome at Homestead. If there had been any sympathy, born of a conviction that the Homesteaders were being robbed of their bread and butter, there would have been trouble. Mr. Frick understood the situation well, and never felt any concern for his personal safety. Of course, he could not foresee that a New York Anarchist would take the trouble to come to Pittsburgh to kill him.—N. Y. Sun.

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